

## Period by allonsysilvertongue

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**Characters:** Eleven (Stranger Things), Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Joyce Byers, Will Byers

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**Summary:**

Eleven is unwell. Hopper feels helpless. He calls on Joyce to help. It's difficult when you have a psychic child who is sick. Jopper being parent, again.

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With the Gate now closed and with Will slowly becoming himself again, not that Joyce would truly ever be certain that he was safe, she liked to enjoy an occasional moment when she could sleep in on a weekend.

It was past nine in the morning and she figured she would give it another hour before she would get up. That was until the door to her bedroom burst open and Will rushed in.

Joyce sat up immediately, her senses suddenly all on full alert.

“What’s the matter, baby?”

Her eyes roamed his body from head to toe to ascertain if he was injured before her gaze eventually met his. She held her breath, so very afraid of seeing the blank, empty gaze that had stared back at her when his body had been a host to the Mind Flayer.

His pupils were blown wide but they were bright with something between excitement and anxiety.

“It’s the Chief! He’s on the phone. He said something’s not right with Eleven,” Will breathed, the words came out in a jumbled rush.

At Hopper’s name, Joyce swung her legs out of bed and rushed towards the phone that Jonathan had restored following the events six months ago when it was ripped off the wall.

“Hello? It’s me. Will told me – “

“Come out here *now*,” he commanded.

She frowned. He sounded on edge.

“What’s going on? Will said something about Jane... Is she okay?”

“El... She’s - She’s in some kind of pain. I don’t know what exactly

but she's not moving off the bed. Look, you need to get here quick."

Any other normal parent would have quickly suggested the clinic or hospital but this was Jane. There were protections needed to be taken into account. Most of all, she knew Hopper only allowed her to leave the house that one night during the Snow Ball. It was still not quite safe for her to be in public.

"I'll be there," she assured him.

Joyce brought Will along with her because she did not want him alone at the house, not with Jonathan over at Nancy's. Plus, she figured, Jane would be happy to see someone her own age.

Once they reached the cabin, Joyce would immediately tell that something was not right. The air felt... *tense*. She opened the door cautiously and gasped. Will stared.

The furniture in the room was airborne, just hanging and spinning slowly in the air as if it was hanging by an invisible thread.

Hopper really had his hands full with a psychic teenager, she thought. She didn't want to think about when Jane threw a tantrum.

"I need you to talk to me, kid. I can't help if you don't."

She followed the sound of Hopper's voice which led her straight to Jane's bedroom. The girl in question was curled on the bed, which she noticed was the *only* furniture still grounded.

"El, come on," Hopper cajoled, sitting at the edge of the bed and looking helpless. She didn't like that look on his face. He *always* knew what to do, except when he had to shop for clothes for El, and she could always rely on him lately. "I could – Joyce! Look, kid, Joyce's here. She's brought Will along. Hey, buddy."

She could hear the relief in his voice as she approached.

"Hey, Chief," Will waved and gestured around him. "This is... something."

"Yeah, it's been like this since about an hour ago when she started

complaining about the pain. I can't figure out..." He shrugged. "Thought you could... Help her or get her to talk."

"Jane, honey," Joyce stepped forward and took the place by the bed that Hopper had just vacated. It was warm and he must have been there all these while, worried about his girl. She brushed Jane's hair comfortingly. "What's wrong? Can you tell me where it hurts?"

She had a shrewd idea since the girl was clutching her stomach. With her face pressed on the pillow, Joyce doubted Jane even knew what was happening around her or how her powers seem to be affecting the objects in the house.

"Is it here? Is this where the pain is?" Joyce asked, pressing gently on her upper abdomen once she managed to get Jane to lie on her back.

The girl shook her head. So Joyce pressed lightly, this time lower.

Again, Jane shook her head. Joyce moved lower, near her cervix to the right hip which made her whimpered.

*Jackpot.*

"That should rule out of food poisoning," Joyce declared. With two children of her own, she was familiar with ailment relating to the abdomen but since this was lower... She bit her lip. "Do you feel... different lately? Tired or irritable? Maybe, backache?"

"She's been tired," Hopper answered from where he was leaning against the doorframe watching them.

Joyce nodded, acknowledging that information. "I'm going to help you off the bed and we'll go to the toilet. Alright?"

At that request, Jane nodded and even though she didn't understand *why*, she pushed herself out of bed regardless. Hopper, on the other hand, tossed her a perplexed look to which Joyce simply pursed her lips and shook her head. She needed confirmation to her suspicion and once she has that, she would explain it to him.

"Pretty cool what you're doing here," Will smiled at Jane as she passed him, pointing to the swiveling lamp above his head.

Her gaze flickered to her surrounding as if only just realizing and then she looked at Hopper, "Sorry," she mumbled and immediately, all the objects fell back with a loud thud, everywhere in the house.

Once they were in the toilet, Joyce patiently waited as Jane removed her pants and stripped down. When she stepped out of her panties, they both looked down. Jane's breath hitched, the fear frozen on her face.

Joyce smiled.

"I think we have our answer of what's happening with you," she spoke in a soft voice. "It's okay, darling. It's something every girl will experience at some point in their life."

"Bleeding?"

"Yes... You're menstruating, having your period," Joyce said as cleaned the mess. With two boys, she never expected to find herself in the position where she had to explain about menstruation to a girl. "The pain you felt, they are called cramps. Nothing a hot bottle, some painkillers and chocolate wouldn't solve. You will have this every month. It's your first time which is why it's so... foreign to you but it is nothing to worry about, Jane. Although... if it gets very unbearable you *have* to tell me, okay?

"Okay," she agreed. "Max... She gets it too?"

"If she hasn't she will."

"You?"

"Me too," Joyce smiled. "Now, I'll get some clean pants for you and we can talk about it more. I'll tell you what I know and you can ask me all the questions you have."

Once she had Jane settled back in bed with a hot bottle across her stomach, she went out to meet Hopper. Will disappeared into the bedroom, carrying a plate of Eggos that he had prepared with Hopper while waiting.

"What happened?"

The Chief had his hands on his hips, staring at Joyce as he waited for an explanation.

“Oh, nothing serious,” Joyce laughed lightly, realizing with a little fondness in her heart that his excessive worrying was actually adorable. She reached out to squeeze Hopper’s arm. “Just, you know, she’s just had her period for the first time.”

He blinked and it was clear *that* was not what he was expecting at all.

“Already?” he frowned. “She’s a kid.”

“She’s going to be 14 in a few months. It’s the age. You should get some tampons and pads from the store. We don’t know which she prefers right now so it’ll be best if you get both. I can wait here and show her how it’s done.”

“What – What is she using... now.”

“We ladies... We always have emergencies. So I gave her mine *but* you really do need to get it.”

“Okay,” he nodded. “Anything else?”

“Probably hot pack, chocolate and ice cream....”

“Thanks, Joyce,” Hopper muttered, drawing a stick out from his pack.

He lighted it up and offered it to her.

“Nothing to worry about,” Joyce lightly bumped his shoulder with hers. “I guess you owe me.”

She was teasing. At this point, they didn’t owe each other anything.

“Sure,” Hopper said easily.

“Will’s at that age, you know. He’ll be needing the talk soon and it’ll be better coming from ... a male. He’ll have questions and you should be able to answer it better than me,” she said casually, the playful smile dancing on her lips. “I’ll call on you to do what’s needed.”

He paled.